

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 6 is added. No new matter is added.

I. Personal Interview

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative during the personal interview conducted on March 10, 2004. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

II. Priority Document

Applicant appreciates the acknowledgement of receipt of the Certified Priority Document at page 2 of the Detailed Action. Applicant respectfully requests that the appropriate box be checked on the Office Action Summary of the next Office Action to also indicate that the certified copy of the Priority Document has been received.

III. Allowable Claim

Applicant appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter in claim 3 and the acknowledgement that the prior art does not disclose the features recited therein. Applicant asserts that claim 3, as well as the remaining pending claims are in condition for allowance for the reasons stated below.

IV. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,417,585 to Oohashi et al. (Oohashi). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant asserts that Oohashi does not disclose each and every feature recited in the rejected claims. For example, Oohashi does not disclose an alternator for use in an automotive vehicle, the alternator comprising *inter alia* a plurality of spokes formed on the axial end of the housing, air inlet ports facing the cooling fan formed at both sides of the spokes, so that cooling air is introduced into the housing through the inlet ports according to

rotation of the cooling fan fixed to the rotor, and the spokes are titled in a direction opposite to a rotational direction of the rotor which respect to a radial line extending from the rotational center of the rotor.

It is alleged in the Office Action that the intake port ribs 63 disclosed in Oohashi correspond to the spokes recited in the rejected claims. Applicant asserts that the intake port ribs 63 do not correspond to the spokes recited in the claims.

In the application, a bearing box 400 is supported by four spokes 430 each extending from the bearing box 400 toward the cylindrical portion of the front housing (page 9, lines 1-4 of the specification). An opening for introducing the cooling air into the front housing 4 is formed between each pair of neighboring spokes, and the opening is divided into plural inlet ports 440 by ribs 432 formed in the opening (page 9, lines 12-15 of the specification). The spokes 430 are formed to have a sufficient mechanical strength to support the bearing box 400 that in turn supports the rotor 2. On the other hand, the ribs 432 are formed to have much less mechanical strength because they are used only for preventing foreign particles such as small stones from entering into the alternator (page 9, lines 16-22). To reduce the airflow noise in the vicinity of the inlet ports 440 each spoke 430 is titled in a direction opposite to the rotational direction of the rotor with respect to a radial line extending from the rotational center of the rotor (page 10, lines 1-5 of the specification). Additionally, the spokes 430 are larger in both the height and the width than the ribs 432 (page 11, lines 14-16).

In contrast, the spokes AA (as shown in the marked-up Fig. 1A of Oohashi provided with the Office Action) and not the ribs 63 correspond to the spokes 430 recited in the claims. For example, the intake ribs 63 are not supporting the bearing box of the alternator shown in Oohashi. Furthermore, the ribs 63 are not larger in both height and width than the spokes AA. Rather, the spokes AA are larger in both height and width than the ribs 63 and appear to

be supporting the bearing box. Thus, the intake ribs 63 correspond to the ribs 432 of the application and not to the spokes 430.

As the spokes AA in Oohashi are not tilted, but rather it is the intake ribs 63 that are titled, Oohashi does not anticipate the rejected claims. Additionally, as Oohashi clearly discloses that it is the intake ribs 63 that are tilted, i.e., the tilt angle β of side surfaces of the intake port ribs in a normal plant of the intake port rib 63 are set $\beta = 10^\circ$ to 20° and particularly 15° in this embodiment, it is the ribs 63 and not the spokes AA that are tilted (see col. 7, lines 16-20 of Oohashi). The reference is silent as to the spokes AA having any tilt angle.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the rejection of claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) be withdrawn.

V. New Claims

Applicant asserts that claim 6 is allowable over the applied references of record as none of the applied references of record whether considered alone or in combination disclose or suggest the alternator as recited in claim 1, further including a plurality of ribs formed on the axial end wall of the housing, some number of ribs being positioned between the spokes, wherein the ribs extend in the same direction as the radial line and the spokes are tilted with respect to the radial line.

VI. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-6 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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